**Canadian Motorized Backcountry Guides Association**

**Course Outline**

**Level 2 - Assistant Guide**

**Winter 2025**

**DESCRIPTION**

This is an advanced snowmobile guiding course and exam. There are two parts – a seven-day training course in January and a six-day exam in April.

Topics covered on the training course will include: risk management, navigation, rescue, travel techniques, terrain selection, guiding techniques and emergency procedures. There will be no assessment during the training course.

The exam component will assessment all the topics covered during the training course. Participants will be assessed as they take turns guiding the group.

**COURSE/LEARNING OUTCOMES**

On completion of this course, the students will be able to:

* Conduct AM and PM hazard assessment meetings
* Prepare daily route plans.
* Use a variety of field tests for assessing snow stability and hazard.
* Apply navigation skills in the field. (Map, compass and GPS)
* Apply route finding and track setting skills to ensure group safety and enjoyment.
* Apply snowmobile guiding leadership principles.
* Rescue a person from a treewell, embankment or creek.
* Rappel, ascend a rope, raise (2:1, 3:1, 6:1), lower
* Improvise transportation of an injured rider.
* Rig a dead sled for heli and trail evacuation.
* Demonstrate winter living skills
* Maintain a high level of professionalism

**PREREQUISITES**

**CAA Level 1 Operations, 80-hour first aid**

**Participants must submit a resume of experience.**

**Participants must have significant personal winter mountain travel expertise in complex terrain.**

**Recommended technical and guiding skills. These skills will be taught on the January training course and assessed in April on the exam. Previous experience and competence will accelerate development up to the exam standard.**

Technical skills: ropework (rappel, ascend a rope, raise a victim using mechanical advantage), map and compass navigation.

Leadership: Working for a guiding operation, for one season or 30 days working with guests.

**Applications will be reviewed based on:**

*Backcountry riding experience in a leadership role in a variety of regions and snowpacks. This is the most heavily weighted application element.*

***Snowmobile/Avalanche industry experience. Some examples include:***

*Guiding / practicum /tail guiding /apprenticeship*

*Avalanche control/forecasting*

*Avalanche course instruction*

*Riding camps*

*Other relevant mountain or outdoor experience. Some examples include:*

*● Other guiding/instructional experience*

*● CAA certificates*

*● ACMG certificates*

*● CSGA certificates*

*● Mountain programs from educational institutions or guiding companies*

*● Rope rescue training / certificates*

**REQUIRED MATERIALS**

Snowmobile in good working order

*See Guide’s Pack content list*

**EVALUATION**

***See Assessment Rubrics for details***

#### There are eight assessment categories. All categories must be passed to pass the exam.

#### Movement skills

Rescue skills

Hazard management

Navigation

Terrain travel

Winter living skills

Leadership

Professionalism

**DAILY PROCESS**

**Guidelines for Candidate Leads**

* The candidate group is briefed at the end of the PM Meeting, as to the destination, goals, expectations, and leading assignments for the following day.
* Lead role assigned. This person will be guiding the group at the start of the day.
  + Responsibilities of the Lead
    - Prepare the group for departure
    - Complete pre-departure checks/briefing
    - Lead out from the lodge
    - Navigation and route selection
    - Hazard management
    - Communication
    - Changes of travel techniques
    - Pacing, stops and regroups
* The other candidates will take the role of highly capable participants/guests.
  + When in this role
    - Let the leader (guide) lead.
    - Be a good guest.
    - Remain vigilant regarding risk management.
    - Only speak up if the leader’s terrain selection / risk management compromises group safety.
* Candidates will be informed where and when they will take over the lead.
* The examiner will follow right behind the leader (second in line)
  + The candidate leader’s comfort level, ability relative to the assignment, and situational awareness will be continually assessed.
  + If the situation requires examiner input
    - If it is an emergency
      * The instructor will take over immediately
    - If a discussion is needed
      * Gather the group
      * Ensure clear communication
        + This may require sleds off, helmets off

**Daily Debrief (1-1.5 hours)**

* Setting – Travel group, quiet, no distractions
* Process – Sequentially through each lead
* Discussion items
  + Describe the lead (from A to B)
  + Identify critical decision points
  + Decision process used
  + Achievement of learning outcomes
  + Insight from instructors
* CAA PM Form Questions
  + How did you address avalanche and travel risk in the terrain?
    - When were you most exposed today, what were the consequences?
    - Were you too aggressive or too conservative for the given conditions and operational risk band?
    - Describe how your group managed problem terrain to reduce risk.
  + Did any human factors influence our plan today?
    - Could we have better managed the team?
    - Did we consider the whole team, other contributing factors, teamwork?
  + Are there any factors affecting your teams plan tomorrow that you need to consider?
  + What key concepts did I learn today?
  + What did I do today that promoted my learning and focus; and what can I do differently tomorrow to better retain concepts and gain knowledge?